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To: ATR-Real Estate Workshop
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In response to the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission's public information session discussing the competitiveness of the real estate industry, there are three main points to be considered:

1. Multiple Listing Services are not utilities, they are cooperatives offering broker-to-broker compensations that helps both brokers and consumers buy and sell homes. Real estate companies of all sizes can compete on a non-discriminatory, level playing field by having access to an inventory of properties.

2. The new ILD policy allows consumers to select an MLS member with whom they want to work and whether to permit marketing of their property on the Internet. Sellers can "opt in" to have their properties displayed on the Internet even if their broker does not participate in sharing his listings for Internet display. This is a win-win situation for both the consumers and Realtors.

3. Real estate is an industry made up predominately of small businesses and independent contractors in an economy dominated by large national corporations. Even through the economic downturns, our industry continues to provide opportunity for new agents willing to train and qualify as professionals. When consumers have a choice (over 76,000 brokerage firms and more than 1.2 million Realtors) the competitive business environment flourishes.

These factors must be taken into account before any final decision on the competitiveness of the real estate industry is made.

Sincerely,

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